

My mother said the empty nests made her think of many a deserted home, where there had been little children; but God gave their spirits wings, and they had flown far out of sight, and were now singing in heaven sweeter songs than any little birds ever warbled upon earth. I always felt, when she spoke in this manner, that she was thinking of my brother Jamie, whose body rested under the green turf, but whose spirit had winged its flight to God who gave it.

You will not wonder that I loved this dear home where I was born, and that I experienced some sorrow when my parents told Willie and me one morning, as spring was near at hand, that they had long contemplated moving to the far west; and as soon as the pleasant days of April should come, we must commence our journey. My heart sank within me at this intelligence. I did not love to think of the change, but my brother was wild with delight. Sometimes, in imagination, he was roaming over the fair prairies, which abound in the western states, or sailing upon the majestic river; at others, he was dressed in leathern clothes, such as he said Robinson Crusoe wore, fighting the bears and crocodiles which he was sure he should encounter. Then again he lost himself, and made famous bonfires as signals to those in search of him. I